

Testimony Supporting

Proposed S.B. No. 446 – An Act Concerning the Definition of the Term “Domestic Worker”

Professor Anika Singh Lemar

Committee on Labor and Public Employees

February 17th, 2014

Senator Winfield, Representative Tercyak and Distinguished Members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee:

My name is Professor Anika Singh Lemar and I have been a resident of Connecticut since 2007. I am a member of the Hand In Hand Domestic Employers Network, a national network of employers of domestic workers who share a common belief that workers and employers should enjoy dignified and respectful employment relationships and also of the Domestic Workers Taskforce.

I am a Clinical Associate Professor of Law at Yale Law School and an employer of a domestic worker. I submit this testimony in support of Proposed Senate Bill No. 446 because I believe that domestic workers should receive the protections that are afforded to other workers in Connecticut. To this end, I believe that removing the current exclusions of domestic workers under Connecticut's laws will provide workers with the protections they rightly deserve.

In addition to removing exclusions, a Bill of Rights that contains protections for domestic workers would facilitate fair and just employment relationships, providing tailored protections to domestic workers and much needed guidance for employers who, like myself, are looking to do the right thing.

I currently employ a nanny in my house on a regular full-time basis, whose work I greatly value. My nanny enables me to retain a full time position at Yale University and my children to receive high-quality care. I endeavor to provide her compensation commensurate with the quality and value of her work. Too many other employers abuse their relationships with the women and men who serve their families and households or are simply uninformed about the relevant regulations. Removing the exclusions, enacting a Bill of Rights, and informing employers of their obligations would set a floor of minimum conditions and provide much needed guidance to employers seeking to cultivate a stable, just and respectful relationship.

There is momentum building in favor of this Bill and I urge the Connecticut legislature to support the move to extend basic minimum labor protections to domestic workers.